

**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
AND CONSERVATION**
Forestry Division



STEVE BULLOCK, GOVERNOR

STATE OF MONTANA

PHONE: (406) 542-4300
FAX: (406) 542-4217

2705 SPURGIN ROAD
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59804

Scoping Notice:

August 10th, 2020

The Forestry Division of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is proposing to offer financial assistance to mitigate the risk from wildland fire to communities and residents in Montana. These funds are offered through the FY19 Q2 Hazardous Fuels Reduction Grant Program.

Fire suppression efforts over the past century, coupled with past management practices and forest growth have led to hazardous fuel conditions in forests across Montana. Increased development in the wildland urban interface coupled with hazardous fuel loading has increased the risk of wildfire to communities, homes, and other highly valued resources and assets. Grant funds from this program support reducing hazardous fuel conditions on private lands to establish fire adapted communities and restore fire-adapted ecosystems in the wildland urban interface.

Located in western Missoula County the purpose of the proposed Horseback Ridge Hazardous Fuels Reduction Grant Program is to reduce wildfire risk to private homes near Missoula by managing hazardous fuel conditions on 40-60 acres of private forest land. Thinning, tree pruning, mechanical chipping, prescribed burning, and pile burning are the proposed management treatments that will be used to reduce wildfire risk by removing hazardous fuels on private land in the project area. Local cooperators administer these grant funds directly to landowner recipients through project agreements as part of a cost-share incentive for reducing wildfire risk on their property.

The proposed action to award grant funding to cooperating partners would contribute to the DNRC meeting goals and objectives identified in Forests in Focus 2.0 and the Montana Forest Action Plan.

The proposed projects would be implemented in the fall of 2020 and completed by the end of 2021. The DNRC is in the scoping phase of the project environmental assessment so all acreages are preliminary estimates. The Montana DNRC invites comments and suggestions concerning this proposal from all interested parties. Please respond by end of business August 21st, 2020 to:

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Attn: Erik Warrington
MT DNRC
2705 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804
or: ewarrington@mt.gov